Serial No. 10/713,262 Docket No. 10551/529

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listing, of claims in the aboveidentified application.

Listing of Claims:

1. (currently amended) An apparatus comprising: at least N parallel gain stages, each gain stage having an input and an output, wherein: each gain stage is individually driven at its input by only one of X related spatial channels, and each gain stage produces at its output an amplitude adjusted version of the only one of X related spatial channels, each gain stage having a gain adjusted independently of the gain of the other N-1 gain stages, wherein N and X are integers, N is greater than 4, and X is one of equal to and not equal to N; and a circuit that downmixes the outputs of the N parallel gain stages to M channels, wherein M is an integer greater than 0 and less than N. 2. (original) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the N parallel gain stages are user-adjusted. 3. (canceled) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the X related spatial channels are a left, right, 4. (original) center, right surround, and left surround channels of an audio program.

6. (original) A method comprising:

low frequency effects channel of the audio program.

5. (original)

adjusting an amplitude of at least one of X related spatial channels to create X adjusted

The apparatus of claim 4, wherein the X related spatial channels further include a

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Serial No. 10/713,262 Docket No. 10551/529

spatial channels; and

downmixing the X adjusted spatial channels to M channels, wherein X is an integer greater than 4 and M is an integer greater than 0 and less than X, and wherein adjusting precedes downmixing.

- 7. (original) The method of claim 6, wherein adjusting is controlled by an end-user.
- 8. (original) The method of claim 6, wherein one of the X related spatial channels is a primary audio channel and at least one of the other of the X related spatial channels is a remaining audio channel.
- 9. (original) The method according to claim 8, further comprising:

comparing the primary audio channel with at least the remaining audio channel to determine a ratio of the primary audio channel to at least the remaining audio channel; and automatically adjusting one of the primary audio channel and the remaining audio channel when a predetermined value for the ratio is not met.